



Photos by Sgt. John Queen, 3rd BCT Public Affairs

(Above) Pfc. Jason Harris of Cullmen, Ala. takes aim with his weapon during a training exercise on Forward Operating Base Union I in Baghdad, Iraq. Harris is a cavalry scout assigned to F Troop, 9th Cavalry, one of the 1st Cavalry Division's brigade reconnaissance troops. (Left) Staff Sgt. Julian Jimenez, of Midland, Texas tries to balance a dime on a cleaning rod sticking out of the barrel of his weapon as a part of a training exercise.

1st Cav. Pilots Make Daring Rescue

By Cpl. Benjamin Cossel
122nd MPAD

CAMP TAJI, Iraq -- For two Apache Longbow pilots, the night of Oct. 16 was just a regular night flying a reconnaissance mission around southern Baghdad. A distorted cry for help came across the emergency radio shattering the chatter of all other communications. They recognized the call sign, they recognized the area and a few minutes later, they were in route to perform what would become a heroic rescue.

"I really couldn't make out at first what was going on. The transmission over the radio was broken up and weak, but I could make out that it was a distress call," said Lodi, Ca native Chief Warrant Officer Justin Taylor, an Apache pilot, with Company C, 1st Battalion 227th Aviation Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team.

At first, the transmission seemed as though it might be coming from U.S. Marine Corps aircraft. The call sign speaking to the downed aircraft was of Marine

Corps designation Taylor said. He radioed to Marine Corps headquarters asking if any aircraft of theirs was down in the area, to which the response came back negative.

"We're in zone 43...." came the weak transmission.

"I recognized the area and immediately made the decision that we were going to break from our sector and go over to the area," said Lebanon, N.H. native Welch. "Those were our guys on the ground and we had to help. My first thought was we would provide aerial security."

As the team changed flight paths they notified the USMC aircraft of their intention as well as calling back to 4th BCT headquarters to alert them to their movement.

"When we flew over the sector, we immediately picked up the heat signature of a burning fire," said Welch.

"But at first we weren't sure what it was, it kind of looked like one of the many trash fires you see all over Baghdad," Taylor added.

Flying over the fire to try and get a

better look at the ground an excited call came up.

"You just flew over our position," the transmission informed.

"Once we had identified the crew on the ground, I made the call that we were going to land and get those pilots out of there," Welch commented. "I had no idea of the situation on the ground or what the landing zone looked like, so I informed my wingman to fly a tight defensive circle around our position to provide cover if needed. As we landed and I got all the cords off of me, I looked back at JT (Taylor) and told him, if he started taking fire, get this bird out of here, leave me and we'll collect all of us later."

Welch had landed his Apache approximately 100 meters from the crash site, armed with his 9mm and an M4 Carbine rifle he set out to collect the downed pilots.

"I basically had to stumble my way through an open field, it was treacherous with pot holes and low brush, I stumbled a couple times," recalled Welch, "but I final-

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Pilots Perform 'Self-Extraction', Save Injured Marines

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ly came up on the crash site about ten minutes later."

When Welch arrived on the scene he saw one pilot standing and one sitting, the two had been able to get a fair distance away from the aircraft.

"As I came up on them, I noticed they looked pretty bad, multiple cuts on their face and both looked like the early stages of shock had set in. I called out to Beck (Chief Warrant Officer Chad Beck, 1st Battalion of the 25th Aviation Regiment, 25th Infantry Division attached to the 4th BCT) who was standing, to get him to help me with Mr. Crow (Chief Warrant Officer Greg Crow, also of 1-25 Aviation). It took a few seconds to get Mr. Beck's attention as he was visibly shaken and dazed."

As the two got Crow up and between them to begin the long trek back, the mess of tangled cords attached to all their equipment nearly tripped them up.

Carrying two wounded back over the treacherous 100 meters to his waiting Apache, Welch said the time seemed to slow down to an absolute crawl as they inched their way back, working carefully not to further injure Mr. Crow.

"We had to move kind of slow," he explained. "I swear it probably took us like ten minutes to get back but it seemed like we were out there for hours, I was never so relieved to see JT and my bird sitting there."

Four personnel, two seats in the Apache. Self-extraction was a maneuver the pilots had been told about in flight school. A maneuver considered dangerous enough that no practical application was given, just the verbal "Here's how you do it"

Hanging from a pilot's flight vest is a nylon strap attached to a carabineer. On each side of the Apache, hand holds are bolted on, primarily to assist maintenance



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Capt Ryan Welch, 29, of Lebanon, N.H. an AH-64D Apache Longbow pilot sits strapped to the outside of his helicopter as Chief Warrant Officer Justin Taylor, 28, of Lodi, Ca. looks out from his gunner position inside the aircraft. The two pilots are both with the 1st Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division.

crews as they work on the birds. They also have another purpose, to be used in the event of a self-extraction. The general idea being a pilot attaches to the side of the helicopter with the nylon strap wrapped through the hand holds connecting the nylon strap with the carabineer, and then flies off to a safe location.

"I knew getting back to my bird," explained Welch, "that Mr. Crow was in no position for self extraction that I would have to put him in the front seat. I radioed to JT and told him what I intended to do, Crow in the front seat, Beck and I strapped to the outside."

Secured and assuming a defensive posture with his rifle, Welch gave Taylor the thumbs up sign and the Apache lifted off.

"I was a little bit freaked out," explained Taylor, "you just don't fly an Apache by yourself, it's definitely a two man aircraft"

At 90 miles per hour the two helicopters flew 20 kilometers to Forward Operating Base (FOB) Falcon, the closest FOB with a Combat Support Hospital (CSH).

Landing on the emergency pad, Welch and Taylor jumped out and helped medical personnel take Beck and Crow inside for treatment.

The patients safely delivered to the CSH, the two exhausted pilots looked at each other with the same thought.

"We both climbed back into our bird," Welch said, "and almost simultaneously said to each other, 'Let's go home.'"

Useful Iraqi Words/Phrases

Excuse me!
lau samaHt[ee]

Friday
High: 77
Low: 60



Saturday
High: 80
Low: 64



Sunday
High: 80
Low: 66



Weather information provided by 1CD Staff Weather Office (SWO)

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News Notes

Worker Makes Explosive Find

CHICAGO (AP) -- A groundskeeper found a rusted, hollowed-out shell of a grenade in the right-field turf of Chicago's Wrigley Field. Police bomb and arson investigators were called to examine the device, which they found to be empty and harmless. "It's a dud, just like the Cubs were," a police spokesman said. Investigators said there was no way to determine how the device ended up on the field.

First Thing's First: Vote, THEN Baby

HARRISBURG, Pa. (AP) -- Dr. Andrea Shaer wanted to vote before she went to the delivery room to give birth to her third child, so she and her husband went first to their polling station at Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center's fitness facility. But more than 100 people were already in line, so Shaer went to the delivery room, gave birth, and returned to vote Tuesday night 30 minutes before the polls closed, intravenous drip in tow. "Knowing how close the race is in Pennsylvania and being a mom, with all the issues there, I just had to try" to vote, Shaer said. Shaer, a nephrologist, or kidney doctor, at the medical center, awoke at 5 a.m. Tuesday when her water broke. She gave birth to a son, Jack.



A Little Rock, Ark., firefighter watches as colleagues spray water onto a gas line fire Monday. Flames were leaping from an intersection in the city's west side. AP

Victorious Bush Vows to Reach Out

WASHINGTON (Austin American-Statesman) -- President Bush claimed a re-election mandate Wednesday after a record 59 million Americans chose him over Democrat John Kerry and voted to expand Republican control of Congress as well. He pledged to pursue his agenda on taxes and Iraq while seeking "the broad support of all Americans."

Kerry conceded defeat in make-or-break Ohio rather than launch a legal fight reminiscent of the contentious Florida recount of four years ago. "I hope that we can begin the healing," the Massachusetts senator said.

Claiming a second term denied his father, George H.W. Bush, the president struck a conciliatory tone, too. "A new term is a new opportunity to reach out to the whole nation," he said, speaking directly to Kerry's supporters.

"To make this nation stronger and better, I will



President Bush shakes hands with Vice President Dick Cheney as the President's daughter, Jenna, looks on during a victory rally Wednesday at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center in Washington. AP

need your support and I will work to earn it," he said. "I will do all I can do to deserve your trust."

It was a warm-and-fuzzy close to one of the longest, most negative presidential races in a genera-

tion.

Bush's victory ensures Republican dominance of virtually every quarter of the U.S. political system for years to come - the White House, Congress and the federal judiciary.

Shaq Heats up New Jersey Shore

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. (AP) -- Shaquille O'Neal caught the ball deep in the low post, used his oversized posterior to bump Alonzo Mourning out of the way, then dropped in a lay-up with no one else around.

Miami's new center had his way against a familiar foe from the Heat's recent past, shooting 7-for-9 from the field and scoring 16 points in just 21 minutes of a 100-77 victory Wednesday night over the New Jersey Nets.

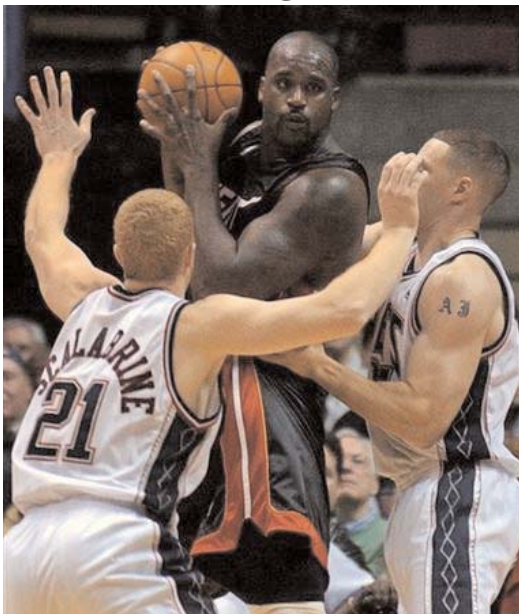
It was anything but a dominant debut in black for O'Neal, who was acquired over the summer from the Los Angeles Lakers for three starters and a first-round draft pick.

But he certainly had his moments despite playing on a sore left hamstring, the best of them coming in the first four minutes of the fourth quarter against the player drafted one spot behind him in 1992.

"I was ordered to be 100 percent when I came back, but I haven't been 100 percent in about 10 years," O'Neal said.

New Jersey's Alonzo Mourning finished with seven points, five rebounds and four fouls in 14 minutes for a gutted Nets team that's a shadow of the squad that reached the NBA Finals two of the past three years.

O'Neal had only six points and three rebounds in the first half, missing his first shot, making his next three and missing his



AP

Miami Heat center Shaquille O'Neal is pressured by New Jersey Nets' Brian Scalabrino, left, and Aaron Williams, right, during the first quarter Wednesday night.

last.

"It went better than I thought it would go," Heat coach Stan Van Gundy said, "but I'm not going to go crazy on the superlatives after one game."

NHL Cancels All-Star Game Due to Lockout

NEW YORK (AP) -- In another sign the NHL season is slipping away, the league canceled its All-Star game Wednesday because of the lockout.

No regular-season games have been played since the season was scheduled to begin Oct. 13, and NHL arenas have been given the go-ahead to release dates on a 45-day rolling basis. With the All-Star game now off the schedule, the next announcement could be the cancellation of the entire season.

"To call off something that's a lot of fun for the fans to enjoy is a shame," nine-time All-Star Jeremy Roenick of the Philadelphia Flyers told The Associated Press. "It has no bearing on anything. They still haven't canceled games in January.



Why haven't they canceled games in January but they're canceling the All-Star game?"

Bill Daly, the league's chief legal officer, said this decision "is not tactical at all," saying it was more of a practical decision to free up blocks of hotel rooms and other facilities that would've been needed.

"We had to make a decision on whether making

those advance commitments made sense," Daly said in Dallas prior to an open forum with fans. "Given where we are with the status of our negotiations, it didn't warrant making those commitments. ... It's not tactical at all."

The lockout, now in its 49th day, was imposed by commissioner Gary Bettman after the collective bargaining agreement expired on Sept. 15.

Waddell said league officials made it clear that Atlanta would be one of the first cities in line for the next available All-Star game.

"We're more disappointed about where we are with the season, but with the All-Star game we would have had an opportunity to showcase our city and our great venue," Waddell said.

In Brief

Engineer Earns \$2 Mil on Jeopardy!

NEW YORK (AP) -- Quiz-show king Ken Jennings has broken another record on "Jeopardy!" He won \$45,099 on the episode that aired Wednesday, bringing his total earnings to \$2,197,000 to make him the top TV game-show winner ever. He beat the previous record of \$2,180,000, set by Michigan engineer Kevin Olmstead on ABC's "Who Wants to be a Millionaire" in 2001. Jennings, a 30-year-old software engineer from Salt Lake City, began his 66-appearances-and-counting streak on the episode that aired June 2.

Elton John to Start Comedy on ABC

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) -- Elton John is making his first foray into series television by developing an ABC comedy about an aging rock superstar and the people around him. The flamboyant musician told the Hollywood trade paper that the as-yet-untitled show would not be based on himself but rather a mix of other fellow pop icons like Rod Stewart, Mick Jagger, Freddie Mercury and David Bowie. "It's not about me, but about everybody we've encountered over the past 30 years," it quoted him as saying. "We've met every star and seen every misbehavior. And it's about the people around the star, who have to put up with them. It's an upmarket 'Spinal Tap.'"